

## COPYRIGHT WARNING

### Notice: warning concerning copyright restrictions

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

7.5.66  
no. 26



THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND

An Inquiry into the Religious Dimensions of Jazz

Gary Mitchener

Submitted to the Faculty of the Episcopal Theological School  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree, bachelor of divinity.

April 13th, 1966  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
I. Religious Dimensions in Culture.....	1
A. Denial of "holy" as a separate category of experience.....	6
1. Depth in general secular experience.....	6
2. Depth in Secular Art.....	7
3. Depth in Folk Art.....	10
B. Relationship of art to religious experience.....	10
1. Both Communicate through symbol.....	11
2. Inherent conflict.....	13
a. Independence of art.....	13
b. Imperialism of religion.....	14
C. religious roles found in art.....	15
1. The role of priest: to celebrate.....	17
a. priestly function of the arts.....	18
b. priestly function of contemporary art.....	20
c. priestly function of jazz.....	21
(1) Freedom and structure.....	21
(2) Community and ensemble.....	22
2. The role of prophet: to protest.....	23
a. prophetic function of the arts.....	25
b. prophetic function of contemporary art.....	26
c. prophetic function of jazz.....	27
(1) Confession.....	27
(2) Improvisation.....	28
II. Folk Art as Social Expression of a Community's Faith.....	32
A. Original unity of religion and art.....	34
1. Holy movement: dance and religion.....	35
2. Holy words: poetry and religion.....	37
3. Holy sounds: music and religion.....	39
B. Fragmentation: developing independence.....	40
1. Functional music.....	41
2. "Art" music.....	41
C. Elements of original unity found in jazz.....	43
1. Repetition and incantation.....	44
2. Suspension and ecstasy.....	45
3. Silence and mysticism.....	47
4. Objectivity.....	48
5. Primitive emphasis on rhythm.....	49
6. Social function.....	50
7. Child-like humor: holy play.....	51
8. Celebration of whole gamut of experience.....	54
a. Events of alienation and loneliness.....	55
b. Events of joy.....	57
III. Development of jazz: historical.....	59
Summary.....	61

## Introduction

"Charles Seeger tells the story of a conference of musicologists after which one of the most famous confided:

'You know, I don't hate jazz; I think it's probably very important and it certainly deserves serious study. The trouble is that all the jazz people treat it as holy, holy, holy!'

To this, Seeger replied:

'Well now, don't you consider the area of classical music in which you specialize as holy, too?'

'Ah,' said the musicologist, 'but it IS!'" <sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the "introduction" to an essay is the place to delineate some of the things which the essay does NOT attempt to do. This essay will not claim for the idiom of jazz any special category of holiness; nor will it be concerned with so-called liturgical jazz or about jazz settings of the Mass. There is a certain lack of integrity in viewing ANY art form from the perspective of wondering how its techniques can be "used" in a practical way. And this lack of integrity is no less unfortunate when it is the church that is doing the "using" for its own liturgical or evangelistic purposes.

Neither is our purpose that of showing how "au fait" the contemporary church can become, or how "artsy crafty"

is her leadership. There is something sad about a college chaplain, for example, who just is not "with it" among the university students, and as a last resort, stages a "jazz Mass" and gets written-up in the campus daily, and immediately satisfies all his personal needs about "making the church relevant". 2

But rather, we happen to have enough respect both for the idiom of jazz and for the liturgical expression of the Christian community that we don't feel they have to become hyphenated in order to stand. Both have their own validity on their own terms. Eric Thacker, an English jazz enthusiast with similar doubts about the liturgical "use" of jazz, asks that these would-be friends of jazz who advocate adaptation

"first be prepared to face up to jazz as it is (and has been), and allow it to make its own testimony, before they presume to discern in it, or impose upon it, a testimony more congenial to their own way of thinking." 3

This essay maintains the thesis that jazz on its own enthusiastically secular terms has some things to say that are profoundly human, and thus, profoundly religious. At least such a possibility is worth investigating.

## I. RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS IN CULTURE

The use of the adjective "religious" calls to mind two possibilities in relating to the world, or to culture: a stance which is life-denying, or a stance which is life-affirming. These two contradictory images have warred with each other at least since the time of the Gnostic controversy in the second century of the church's proclamation. Teilhard de Chardin refers to this conflict as "two Christianities"--the Christianity which disdains the world, and the Christianity which overcomes the world. One is the way of escape; the other is the way of evolution.<sup>4</sup> The life-denying side of the polarity results in an overspiritualization of the meaning of the Christian life--"the characteristic heresy of American protestants".<sup>5</sup> The life-affirming side of the polarity leads to a view of the Christian life which is both secular and material (in a proper sense of those words) and indeed sacramental.

To take the life-affirming stance, however, is not as simple as it may appear. Forst of all, it means seeing nature as the milieu through which the religious dimension can be perceived. This is relatively easy when I talk about sunsets

and "purple mountained majesty". It is considerably more difficult when I talk about germs and viruses and the violence of animal survival.

But even more is implied here. To take the sacramental side of the polarity means not only to see God in nature, but to see God in culture as well. Nature has to do with the world as we find it. Culture has to do with changing it, cultivating it, refining it. Culture means not merely accepting the world as we find it, but seeing through nature the movement of man. The Dutch have a word for culture, "bes-chaving", which means "grinding to a finish."<sup>6</sup> To say that culture has religious dimensions is saying a great deal more than simply saying that nature has religious dimensions. The sacramental view affirms both.

Whenever a Christian celebrates the sacrament of the ~~Lord's~~ Supper, he acts-out his total dependence on the world and his affirmation of it. Even in the consecrated elements themselves, the bread and the wine, this attitude toward the world is affirmed. This is not manna from heaven, untouched by human hands. Rather it is the result of processing. It is the result of wineries and bakeries, labor unions and trucking corporations and salesmen.<sup>7</sup> It is the result of ordinary activities and relationships. It expresses, in a kind of stylized drama, the stance which the Christian takes in relation to the world. It says that man finds God not in turning away from ordinariness, but in embracing it.

"But what would our spirits be, O God, if they did not have the bread of earthly things to nourish them, the wine of created beauties to intoxicate them, and the conflicts of human life to fortify them?" 8

Not only is this affirmation of the world seen in sacrament, but in mythology as well. Whenever a Christian recalls the story of Adam, he re-affirms that it is the whole world that is the object of God's concern. "He's got the whole wide world in his hands" is the way the spiritual expresses it. God gave to Adam the responsibility of shaping culture when he told him to name the animals in the garden of Eden. In Hebrew thinking, the inner meaning of every creature is summed-up in his name; name denotes meaning. So in the Genesis account, it is significant that it was Adam, not God, who was assigned the naming of the animals.<sup>9</sup> He was given dominion over the beasts and was expected to live in reciprocity with man and nature. He was to cultivate the garden and enjoy its fruits. The turning point came when he allowed one of the animals themselves, the serpent, tell him what to do. He abdicated his responsibility. He betrayed his manhood by refusing to act responsibly in relation to nature and culture. He sold out.

In the New Testament as well, the Genesis theme is picked-up in naming the Christ the "Second Adam", or the New Adam. In the Christ, full manhood is affirmed including the whole range of human responsibility. Jesus tells parables about stewards who were foolish: they buried their talents, they escaped their responsibilities. Paul talked about putting



behind childhood dependencies, about once speaking as an immature child, but now that he is a man, putting away immature childish reactions.

In all of this--sacrament and myth and parable--the Christian affirms that Christ is lord of all of life. Karl Barth insists that we have lost the completeness of creation and that this must be restored by forgiveness and renewal. He says that the work of culture is among the earthly signs by which the church makes God's goodness known to the world.<sup>10</sup> Christ was resurrected not simply for some in-group of Victorian respectability, but for beatnik as well as church member, ragtime pianist as well as publican. In this attempt to find God in culture, the church reaches out in freedom to embrace what is good and to cure what is broken.<sup>11</sup>

#### A. Denial of "holy" as a separate category of experience

There is no such thing as "holy" language!<sup>12</sup> There is only language. There is only ordinary language, language of this world which is used, however inadequately, to express what is holy.

One of the most powerful statements of this ordinariness of the holy is found in that unforgettable paragraph in J.D. Salinger's novel, Franny and Zooey. Throughout the book, the image of a fat lady emerges as the epitome of middle-aged drabness and mediocrity. The particular paragraph is this:

"Are you listening to me? There isn't anyone there who isn't Seymour's Fat Lady...don't you know that? Don't you know that goddam secret yet? And don't you know--listen to me now--don't you know who that Fat Lady really is? Ah buddy. Ah buddy. It's Christ himself. Christ himself, buddy." 13

From an area totally different from modern fiction, namely New Testament scholarship, Professor Marcus Barth says that one thing Jesus meant by his willingness to submit to the baptism of John was a rejection of the mediated religion of the Temple, and an affirmation of his solidarity with the world. It was not a decision to join a "religious" community at all. Rather, at the point where he was immersed in the dirty water of the Jordan river, he identified himself with the mob of anti-clerical rabble,<sup>14</sup> he identified himself with those who had nothing to confess but their own sins. It was a rejection of holy language.

From still other perspectives, namely that of a dramatic critic, Marvin Halverson writes,

"Grace is at work in the world in places that are not ecclesiastical and ways that do not appear religious." 15

The late Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber, says,

"Real religion means overcoming religion as a special, isolated domain, with its separate rules and rites apart from life, and instead moving always to 'become life' itself." 16

Folk-singer Joan Baez says simply, "Living is my religion."

In the light, then, of this affirmation that holiness is not a separate category of human experience, but a quality of depth which can be seen in all of human experience, the objections

to jazz having any religious significance fall apart. It is silly to protest that jazz is too much "of this world" precisely because there is no music in existence that is not "of this world"! There is nothing any more "worldly" about Charlie Parker than about Josquin des Pres or Palestrina. There is no holy language. There is only language, earthly language. And we use it to shout praise, we use it to rejoice in spontaneous and irrepressible joy, and we use it to search for the reality of the divine-human encounter.

#### 1. Depth in general secular experience

"Thou art a man," wrote William Blake; "God is no more."

Only if nothing is profane can anything be sacred. Whenever we talk about the religious dimension of any aspect of culture, the first thing we must deal with is the traditional distinction between natural and revealed theology. Back in the Middle Ages, the Scholastics were faced with the predicament of having the Bible in one hand and Aristotle in the other. The solution they found was a kind of non-aggression pact between the two: a synthesis by juxtaposition. Reason began with the human and worked its way upward toward the divine; revelation began with the divine and worked its way downward toward the human. Both are of God. But this is no longer an adequate schematization precisely because of it's being an oversimplification.

Whenever a Christian talks about revelation, he must be careful not to separate the world of redemption from the

world of creation. The patron heretic in this error is Marcion-- a man shocked at the earthiness of the Old Testament, a man who failed to see that unless there was some meaning in natural theology, revealed theology became meaningless as well. Re-demption is not God creating out of nothing. Whatever are the inadequacies of natural theology--and its inadequacy lies in its ambiguity and its incompleteness--the Christian must still affirm that "it is in many and various ways" that God makes himself known to the human condition.

## 2. Depth in Secular Art

Authentic art forms can be profoundly religious in two ways, according to Paul Tillich: implicitly and explicitly.

"It is implicitly religious if it expresses, in whatever fashion, the artist's sensitive and honest search for ultimate meaning and significance in terms of his own contemporary culture. If religion is defined as man's 'ultimate concern for Ultimate Reality,' all art which reflects, however partially and distortedly, this ultimate concern is at least implicitly religious, even if it makes no use whatever of recognizable 'religious' subject-matter or any traditional 'religious' symbols.

"Picasso's 'Guernica' is profoundly religious in this implicit sense because it expresses so honestly and powerfully modern man's anguished search for ultimate meaning and his passionate revolt against cruelty and hatred.

"Authentic art is explicitly religious if it expresses the artist's sensitive and honest search for ultimate meaning and significance with the aid of recognizable 'religious' subject-matter or 'religious' symbols, that is, by using, in whatever way, the familiar materials of some historical religious tradition. In the Christian tradition, all Biblical material and such symbols as the Cross are 'religious' in this sense. The mere use of such material does not, of course, guarantee either artistic integrity or significant religious expressiveness. Indeed, much so-called religious art today is

totally lacking in both artistic and religious value, despite its use of traditional 'religious' subject-matter and symbolism. It lacks artistic vitality and is therefore wholly inexpressive; it is therefore necessarily devoid of significant religious content or meaning. Liturgical art which is traditionalistic and manneristic is 'bad' art; the handling of 'religious' material by such contemporary painters as Rouault, Mattner, Raes, and Chagall, in contrast, is authentic, explicitly expressive, religious art as here defined."

There is much "bad" art, then, that although it uses traditional symbols and is used for ecclesiastical purposes, is not religious simply because it is not an authentic expression of man's quest for ultimate meaning. Bad art cannot be religious. And similarly, there is honest art that, although it uses none of the traditional symbols, is profoundly religious. Jazz can be found in both categories.

There emerges from all this discussion a starting-point:

(1) to be an artist is first of all to be a man, and to express with honesty the human predicament; (2) similarly, to be religious--at least in an authentically Christian sense--is to be a man, to affirm true humanity, that humanity for which we were created. The experience of being a man, then, is the point at which art and religion intersect. The quest for the "beautiful" and the quest for the "holy" have a given starting-point. It is here that artistic imagination and religious sensitivity meet.

Robert Penn Warren writes:

"An artist is a man before he is an artist. So the fundamental relation of an artist to religion is that of a man to religion."

Professor Tillich writes:

"The religious dimension is not one category alongside others, but it is the dimension of depth in all experience."

Any experience, then, which is human--no matter how far removed from those narrow categories which conventional art calls "pretty" or which conventional religion calls "pious"--can be the point at which we can begin our conversation.

What has been said, in general, about the religious dimension and the artistic dimension being extensions of secular human experience, is even more valid from a perspective which is specifically Christian. The Christian doctrine of creation and incarnation both affirm that the Christian is free to take seriously the secular structures of meaning and to see in them the milieu, the context, in which God comes to man. The Christian is a man who is free to take the world seriously.<sup>20</sup> The Christian is free to be used in this world, to celebrate the presence and power of God's word as it is seen and heard in this world,<sup>21</sup> in the most unlikely, unchurchy places.

"For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." <sup>22</sup>

was John's answer when people insisted that God must come to man in certain traditional channels.

"I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." <sup>23</sup>

was the answer Jesus gave when the religious experts were offended by the enthusiasm of his Palm Sunday street-parade.

### 3. Depth in Folk Art

Everything that has been said about the religious qualities of art in general become focused particularly in folk art. This is primarily so because of its social character. Folk art is social in that it celebrates the common experiences of human life, the experience of the individual in relation to the community. The whole gamut of individual experience--from sorrow to joy--is acted-out, or danced-out, in a way that those who actually do the dancing as well as those who participate as observers and listeners can re-establish communication with each other and with themselves. A little later we will show how jazz as a specific form of folk art expresses particularly this social character.

#### B. Relationship of art to religious experience

Both artistic experience and religious experience, at their best, point beyond themselves. Both have to do with truth.

"We all know," writes Pablo Picasso, "that art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand."<sup>24</sup> Similarly, religion--if it is true to its calling to serve a God who never completely reveals his face and always remains partly hidden--never claims to be truth itself; it only claims to point beyond itself to the Truth who is the source both of art and of religion.

# 1. Both Communicate through Symbol

The similarity between art and religion is seen on two levels: they both communicate, and they both communicate through symbol. It is no accident that "communion"--a word with religious connotations--is so closely related to "communication"--a word thrown-around in discussions of art and art criticism.

Communion presupposes communication. And communication presupposes meaning. And meaning presupposes words. But words may become meaningless and language may actually hinder communication. Some have argued that this is the primary characteristic of language in our own century: that language has broken down.

The Christian statement that "the Word became flesh" does not necessarily mean that the Word became verbal. Perhaps when verbal communication breaks down--as it apparently has in our time--perhaps we are then free to break the confines of verbalization and communicate meaning through all the senses of the flesh. "Perhaps now meaning--and thus communion--may be restored." 25

Thus, to say that art is communication does not simply mean art is rational understanding. Rather this is to say art communicates that person-to-person essence which man feels and longs for within himself. A Jesuit scholar and literary critic, Father Walter Ong of Saint Louis University maintains that a work of art is not merely a "well-wrought urn"--aloof from the personality of the artist; rather it must be known in



terms of a personal relationship--it is an object by the means of which one lonely voice cries out to another.<sup>26</sup> Thus both religion and art use symbolic means to testify to reality, to point beyond themselves.

To make this concrete from the literature of jazz, there is a powerfully vivid passage in James Baldwin's Another Country in which the young saxophonist communicates through the symbolism inherent in his artistic idiom the basic questions of human love.

"And, during the last set, he came doubly live because the saxophone player, who had been way out all night, took off on a terrific solo. He was a kid of about the same age as Rufus...but somewhere along the line he had discovered that he could say it with a saxophone. He had a lot to say. He stood there, wide-legged, humping the air, filling his barrel chest, shivering in the rags of his twenty-odd years, and screaming through the horn 'Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?' And again, 'Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?' This, anyway, was the question Rufus heard, the same phrase, unbearably, endlessly, and variously repeated, with all of the force the boy had. The silence of the listeners became strict with abruptly focused attention, cigarettes were unlit, and drinks stayed on the tables; and in all of the faces, even the most ruined and most dull, a curious, wary light appeared. They were being assaulted by the saxophonist who perhaps no longer wanted their love and merely hurled his outrage at them with the same contemptuous, pagan pride with which he humped the air. And yet the question was terrible and real; the boy was blowing with his lungs and guts out of his own short past; somewhere in that past, in the gutters or gang fights or gang shags; in the acrid room, on the sperm-stiffened blanket, behind marijuana or the needle, under the smell of piss in the precinct basement, he had received the blow from which he never would recover and this no one wanted to believe. Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me? The men on the stand stayed with him, cool and at a little distance, adding and questioning and corroborating, holding it down as well as they could with an ironical self-mockery; but each man knew that the boy was blowing for ever, one of them." 27

## 2. Inherent Conflict

Yet even though both religion and art use myth and symbol to communicate the basic questions of life and love and suffering, there is a conflict. Art always involves an "as if" while religion always involves something deeper than any "as if"--some kind of commitment. Literary critic Cleanth Brooks says that when religion loses its hold, it turns into poetry--something which gives possibilities for contemplation with which we can refresh our imaginations and perhaps enlarge our spirits, but still a kind of indulgence. At this point what was once passionate conviction and faith turns into mere literature--a kind of fiary tale with ethical implications.<sup>28</sup> So in pointing out the similarity of religion and art both communicating through symbol, we cannot easily dismiss an inherent conflict between them.

### a. Independence of Art

The inherent conflict is seen, first of all, in the independence of art. In the primitive structures of a community, artistic expression is a kind of religious act. But as secularization occurs in general, so specifically in art, there is a growing independence from religious domination. Indeed it is possible to trace the development historically of any art (or for that matter, philosophy or science) in terms of its growing independence from religion. Harvard Divinity School professor Harvey Cox uses the word "secularization" to define the "loosing of the world from religious and quasi-religious understandings

of itself, the dispelling of all closed world views, the breaking of all supernatural myths and sacred symbols." (Time Magazine, April 8, 1966). In our present discussion, we can see this in the original use of biblical imagery in the spirituals of slavery days. Following Emancipation, however, a growing secularization took place in the use of poetic imagery: "crossing Jordan" was replaced by "going to Alabama".

#### b. Imperialism of Religion

The other side of the conflict is the imperialism which religion assumes toward culture. Because of the quality of commitment which religious faith entails, there arise a serious question as to whether art can be a holy act, or whether the "wholly Other" (to use Rudolph Otto's phrase) regards any form of culture as an intrusion which distracts from the goal of devotion. There is something all-embracing in Jesus' words to the young man to sell all that he has and come and follow him.

In a book about the Psalms written by the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton (known in the Trappist order as Father Louis), there is a discussion of this point of view which, although related specifically to the monastic life, has a bearing on this conflict:

"Art' and 'literature' as such no doubt have a part to play in the monastic life. But when a man lives in the naked depths of an impoverished spirit, face to face with nothing but spiritual realities for year after year, art and literature can come to seem peculiarly shabby and unsubstantial--or else they become a lure and a temptation. In either case, they are a potential source of unrest and of dissatisfaction." 29

A distinction must be made, however, between this conflict which is inherent in the nature of the religious life and the life of art, and the conflict which goes back to an inadequate view of religion which is life-denying for its own sake, and like certain motifs in Buddhism and Calvinist-type Christianity, assumes a negative judgment toward this world of creation.<sup>30</sup> Wherever the will to live is suppressed, wherever salvation is sought in destruction, wherever God is represented by a great "no", then music as well as theater and dance is condemned.

#### C. Religious Roles Found in Art

There are three images or roles which come out of the community experience of primitive man which may be used as categories in the discussion of a theology of art in general or the religious dimensions of jazz in particular. The images are those of the story-teller, the priest, and the prophet.

If it is true that the religious is not a separate category of experience alongside other categories, like politics and economics and the arts, but rather is, as Tillich maintains, the dimension of depth in all experience, then jazz can have religious dimensions in the sense that it expresses some of the depth of the human predicament. The figure in early society which performed this function was the singer or poet, the writer of epics, the story-teller. Such a function involves acting-out, or dancing-out, the total faith-commitment of the community--the planting of crops, the coming of age of sons, the fighting of wars, love,

and death. All of human experience was summed-up by the story-teller in a form which reflected the faith-understanding of the community, in short, the art form itself was the expression of the religious dimension. Jazz, we shall see, is a valid expression of a particular people's experience and thus performs the function of story-teller in pointing to certain religious dimension of that experience.

The second image is that of priest as the one who represents the community in the celebration of God's incarnation in the world. Such a celebration is based on a view of the world which takes human life and history seriously as the milieu of grace, the context in which God reveals himself. There are two aspects of this priestly role: one of representing and the other of celebrating, both of which we will indicate how jazz performs this role.

But thirdly, if the priestly role is taken as profoundly, the image inevitably leads to that of a prophet, for one cannot exist without the other. Art in the twentieth century is peculiarly concerned with the prophetic role, with pointing to the anguish and guilt and isolation and emptiness in the present experience of civilisation. And if it is true generally of contemporary art, it is true specifically of jazz, for jazz--born out of struggle and oppression--remains essentially a music of protest. And it is from this radical protest that jazz-as-affirmation emerges. A man becomes a prophet out of love, because he cares deeply and he sees the possibility of change. So jazz

does not end with the wail of melancholy but moves on toward the affirmation of life.

"Some day ah'm gonna lsy down dis heavy load  
Gonna grab me a train, gonns clam aboh'd  
Gonna go up No'th, gonna ease mah pain  
Yessuh Lord, gonns catch dat train."

"Times is bad but dey won't be bad always  
Gonna git better 'cause dey cain't git wue."

"Times gonna git better in de promised lan'  
Ef ah kin jes grab me a handfull a freight train  
Ah'll be set." 31

It is by using these three social images--the storyteller, the priest, and the prophet, but particularly the last two, that we will discuss the religious dimension of jazz as a folk art form.

#### 1. The Role of Priest: To Celebrate

The role of a priest is to lead a celebration. This celebration is two-fold: it is representative and it is affirmative. The representative function is seen in the New Testament admonition to "bear you one another's burdens". From this there develops a doctrine of community, indeed, a doctrine of the church. Whenever one member of the community offers to God his prayers and his suffering and his struggle for meaning, it is a store of strength on behalf of the others.

This vicariousness, in turn, leads to a community affirmation. Henry Miller, in speaking of the rugged coast

area in California south of Carmel-by-the-Sea, where he did a great deal of his writing, says "It was here in Big Sur that I first learned to say 'Amen!'"<sup>32</sup> This quality of affirming the sacredness of "what is", of saying "amen!" to one's fate by saying "yes" to life--this is a kind of celebration. The tradition of the priest is based on this belief that human life and history are a part of God's plan. Any art form which expresses this quality of celebration is somewhat akin to the medieval mystery plays which saw all of history, from Creation to the Last Judgment, as the theater for grace working in the world.

#### a. Priestly Function of the Arts

One of the functions of art is to celebrate, often in a language that is non-verbal, the common experiences of human life. The artist is not just a story-teller; he is a mediator of a people's spirit, a celebrant of its values, in short, a priest. The Parthenon expresses the values of ancient Athens. The Gothic cathedrals tell of the God of the Middle Ages, their arches and towers and stained glass pointing beyond themselves. As a priest at Holy Communion mediates the grace of a transcendent God, so the artist communicates despair and glory, agonies as well as healing.

In the following excerpts from James Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, the author wrestles with the question of his own vocation in which he contrasts the clergyman with the artist, both in the language of priesthood.

"He had seen himself, a young and silent-mannered priest, entering a confessional swiftly, ascending the altar steps, incensing, genuflecting, accomplishing the vague acts of the priesthood which pleased him by reason of their semblance of reality and of their distance from it." 32

"...symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being." 34

"His throat ached with a desire to cry aloud...This was the call of life to his soul not the dull gross voice of the world of duties and despair, not the inhuman voice that had called him to the pale service of the altar." 35

"He would never swing the thurible before the tabernacle as priest. His destiny was to be elusive of social or religious orders...He was destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others or ~~from~~ to learn the wisdom of others himself wandering among the snares of the world." 36

"...to one who was but schooled in the discharging of a formal rite rather than to him, a priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life." 37

None of this, obviously, is to say that the function of priest and artist are identical; only that there is overlapping. "Man is fallen," writes John Dixon, "and his art can both manifest and analyze his sin...Man cannot make a redemptive art but he can make an art that communicates what he experiences of redemption as a man and what he knows of it as an artist." 38

Tom Driver of Union Seminary asks the question whether there can be such a thing as Protestant art. Art functions primarily as a celebration while Protestantism has as its



center the principal of protest.<sup>39</sup>

"The Protestant principle implies a judgment about the human situation, namely, that it is basically distorted."<sup>40</sup>

The Protestant artist, says Driver, is more effective at voicing critical judgment than he is at expressing the body of the faith in works of the imagination. In this same line, we have already referred to Paul Tillich's estimate of "Guernica"--the war-painting by Picasso--as "the best present-day Protestant religious picture" because it shows "the human situation without any cover."<sup>41</sup>

But can this same hypothetical artist affirm the very tradition over against which he would stand in protest? Driver says it is an impossible task because of the dialectic involved: it means saying "yes" and "no" at the same time; it means teaching the law in the same breath as proclaiming freedom from the law, making men to be religious at the same moment as redeeming them from religiousity.<sup>42</sup>

#### b. Priestly Function of Contemporary Art: Twentieth Century

"Art does not reproduce the visible;" says artist Paul Klee, "rather it makes visible."<sup>43</sup> This making visible refers to a function that is revelatory. Modern art, in particular, discloses hidden qualities, awakens perception to aspects of reality which are unrecognized by the jaded, habitual prejudiced ear.<sup>44</sup>

### c. Priestly Function of Jazz

Whatever has been said about art celebrating the common experiences of life is particularly appropriate to jazz. There is no human experience excluded from the celebration of jazz; its imagery embraces the whole of life, and through it all affirms life, affirms the world including its pain, and manages to laugh exultantly. This is one of the astonishing aspects of jazz in general, and the blues in particular. Soren Kierkegaard said that despair is the springboard of faith. And the blues somehow avoids intrinsic pessimism which, at first glance, would seem to be natural, given the sordid experiences they portray. In many of the blues, however, the sordidness is somehow redeemed, often through the sheer force of sensuality, into an almost exultant affirmation of life and love and sex and hope.<sup>45</sup>

#### (1) Freedom and Structure

Albert Camus writes,

"There is not a single true work of art that has not in the end added to the inner freedom of each person who has known and loved it."<sup>46</sup>

One ingredient of this celebration of jazz is the delicate balance between freedom and structure, a balance essential in any form of art, but one that is the very heart of jazz. The freedom-side of the balance Berdyaev refers to when he says,

"In art there is liberation...victory over the burden of necessity...partial transformation of life."

Harvard psychology professor Eric Erickson talks about "basic trust in one's origins and the courage to emerge from them" and this, too, has to do with the freedom of jazz, the freedom to accept willingly the structures (like, for example, harmonic progression) and even to improvise upon the structures themselves.

## (2) Community and ensemble

The second aspect of jazz as celebrant has to do with its ensemble character. In the act of improvising, there is a balance between respect for the individual in his individuality and respect for the creativity of the corporate effort.<sup>48</sup> One could not exist without the other: individual and community.

Both aspects of jazz as celebrant--the balance between freedom and structure, and the balance between the individual and the community--are expressions of qualities which are central to Christian experience.

## 2. The Role of the Prophet: To Protest, To Call to Repentance

There is always a struggle between the role of priest and the role of prophet. Each side of the struggle is marked by suspicion and mistrust of the other. However, Biblical scholarship indicates that in ancient Israel, the roles of priest and prophet were not as antithetical as was previously assumed. Most of the prophets in the Old Testament may even have had cultic roles. The prophetic role of denouncing hypocrisy comes from within the community of faith itself, rather than from the outside.

Indeed, whenever the priestly role is taken in a profound way, it inevitably becomes a prophetic one, since a man cannot celebrate the glories of a society without exposing certain hollow claims which the society makes for itself.

From the field of literature, a modern prophet, Eugene O'Neil, speaks of his criticism of his own country:

"I am going on the theory that the United States, instead of being the most successful country in the world, is its greatest failure...its main idea is that everlasting game of trying to possess your own soul by the possession of something outside of it, too. America is the foremost example of this because it happened so fast here and with such enormous resources. The Bible has already said it much better: 'For what shall it profit a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul.'" 49

Robert Penn Warren writes,

"If a man starts loving his country, he is practically out of business as a writer. He needs to have an argument with his country as shock lies behind all creativity."

In a profound sense, a prophet loves that community against which he protests. The most nihilistic artistic protest never rejects culture absolutely; he always leaves the possibility of repentance. The prophet's "lover's quarrel" with his own people is deeply moving precisely because he cares so deeply and with such compassion.

Again, Albert Camus, in accepting the Nobel Prize in literature, spoke of his art in this way:

"It is a means of stirring the greatest number of men by providing them with a privileged image of our joys and woes."

He defined "the two trusts that constitute the nobility of his (the writer's) calling" as the "service of truth" and the "service of freedom". 51

These are the two primary religious roles, then, of art: the priestly and the prophetic; the one celebrates sacred qualities in the experience of the community and the other calls it to account for its failures. The priest mediates a vision of wonder to his people; the prophet unmasks false sanctity, announces judgment on the cheap and pretentious, pricks pride and complacency with his radical protest, and in so doing, joins the priest in ultimate affirmation.<sup>52</sup>

# a. Prophetic Function of the Arts

Professor Tillich writes,

"The church listens to prophetic voices outside itself." 53

One of the most articulate of these prophetic voices is the voice of art, a kind of "spiritual alarm clock" as Bernard Scott claims:

"Might it not very well be that under God the arts, whether they understand it this way or not, are the spiritual alarm clocks for our day, to shake us up and bring us into focus, to check for phony tendencies of the heart, chill us with irony and wash us with beauty and preserve us in a saffhood that many things in our culture conspire to destroy. The arts are certainly full of bad theology, but they also give us the stumbling truth that the human heart is not filled easily. They have the virtue of being alive and the grace to wonder out loud...I see the arts rushing into our vacuum claiming for itself a priestcraft it cannot perform but also cannot wait for from us." 54

But prophets have seldom been received in a pleasant manner, due in part to the shock which usually accompanies their message. This is also true of the prophetic role of the arts.

"A deep art is bound to carry some shock to the devout, just as it carries some shock to the conventional. The devout man is committed to an order not of this world, and the conventional man is committed to an order to this world. Deep art implies a destruction of order for the sake of reordering. There is something incorrigible and

anarchic lurking in art. The devout and the conventional are right. It is dangerous." 55

So writes Robert Penn Warren.

#### b. Prophetic function of Contemporary Art:

##### Twentieth Century

Nietzsche, in referring to man's laziness in hiding behind opinions and customs, said this about the prophetic role of the artist:

"Only artists hate this slovenly life in borrowed manners and loosely fitting opinions and unveil the secret, everybody's bad conscience, the principle that every human being is a unique wonder...beautiful and worth contemplating." 56

Twentieth century art is particularly adept at "unveiling the secret." There is the appearance of chaos in much contemporary art simply because it is the artist himself, rather than the preacher or the historian or the sociologist, who speaks most clearly to the crisis of our civilization.<sup>57</sup> Whenever art "unveils the secret" of anguish and guilt and isolation and emptiness and doubt, whenever art rediscovers the irrational and the demonic, one can only say of its function that it is indeed prophetic.

### c. Prophetic Function of Jazz

Jazz is "protest" music. The old jazz was a protest against the narrowness of the semi-feudal southern way of life in the years before the first World War. Modern jazz, similarly, is a protest against the monopoly control of music and the commodity-like exploitation of musicians by commercial interests.<sup>58</sup> Not that the protest can be this narrowly defined to one specific area, but these are simply examples. The best of jazz will always nourish the soul of everyone to whom meek conformity is anathema; and the "blue noses and Big Brothers of the world"<sup>59</sup> will always be suspicious of that kind of music.

#### (1) Confession

"Jazz is a man telling the truth about himself." <sup>60</sup>

Charlie Parker:

"Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn."<sup>61</sup>

Billie Holiday:

"Lester (Lester Young) sings with his horn; you listen to him and can almost hear the words." <sup>62</sup>

"Young kids always ask me what my style is derived from, and how it evolved and all that. What can I tell them? If you find a tune and



it's got something to do with you, you don't have to evolve anything. You just feel it, and when you sing it other people can feel something too." 63

Benny Goodman:

"After a musician has played a tune over and over again, what can he do but 'kick it around.'"<sup>64</sup>

## (2) Improvisation

All the above comments by jazzmen indicate the close relation between jazz improvisation and a type of confessional honesty. Improvisation has always been identified with folk art, and even in compositional art it has continued into the advanced forms all the way up to the nineteenth century, when a drastic separation took place between the performer and the composer. The "ad lib" of Bach and Handel and Mozart and Beethoven was an integral part of the performance.

The distinction between improvisation and composition is not really so drastic as it may seem. The distinction between music that is written down and music that is not written down has to do mainly with the size of the form, the structure of the work, since the more comprehensive the form the less the musician can rely on his own improvisation.<sup>65</sup> Improvisation is a kind of composition which is consciously worked-out and carefully built-up from performance to

performance.<sup>66</sup> It requires a given musical language -- as does music that is written down. The idea that improvisation begins each time "from scratch" and somehow emerges from some mysterious subconscious well is something of a myth.

A close parallel can be found in improvised theater of the sixteenth century through the eighteenth century in Italy: the "Commedia dell'Arte" with masked figures playing stock roles, Harlequin, Columbine, Scaramouche, and of course, Pantaloon. 67

Pierre Lou's Duchartre says of that era of Italian Comedy, that the performance was done "in such a manner as to give the impression that all they do has been pre-arranged." "Certain it is that there never was such a thing as complete and absolute improvisation, nor ever can be...his (the actor's) memory was stored with phrases, conceits (conceits), declarations of love, reproaches, delirium, and despair." 68

This calls to mind a renewal of interest in our own century in improvisational theater. In an interview in a San Francisco newspaper, the director of an improvisational theater group in that city made these observations:

"Improvisational theater reveals the actor in all the naked and vulnerable areas of his psyche."

"You don't have anything out there to help you but yourself. It's like a jam session by jazz musicians. You have to trust the other performers and you feed each other ideas until a harmonic balance is reached."

"It's an area where the chips are really down. You either come through or flop. This kind of art boils down to one thing--you learn to be a person first and then an actor." 69

The parallels which can be drawn with jazz are obvious. The important thing here is a quality of authentic experience, not the technical aspects of melodic improvisation. Marcel Roust wrote,

"The great quality of art is that it rediscovers, grasps, and reveals to us that reality far from which we live, from which we get farther and farther away as the conventional knowledge we substitute for it becomes thicker and more impermeable." 70

Along this same line, the outstanding jazz critic, Nat Hentoff, writes,

"The most evocative, the most penetrating impact of art occurs when it seizes your emotions and allows them, in a sense, to breathe. So many different and conflicting feelings, many of them subconscious, jostle against each other inside us that we often try by an act of will or by a strategy of displaced concentration to suppress these emotions which we won't yet fully understand or fear or doubt we can handle. And yet these emotions are relentlessly present, and eventually they have to be released in some way or they fester into neuroses.

"What art can do is to reach those emotions, allow them to emerge, and then help shape them into a pattern that is capable of suddenly clarifying 'our own image in the world'".

"I grew up in a family in which overt emotions was suspect...I was relieved to realize there were cultures and people who were not ashamed of their feelings and who found deep satisfaction in getting them out.

"If we are to make sense of our lives, we have to find out our image in the world, and once having begun to understand that image, we can then start to build bridges to end those areas of alienation which cut us off from parts of ourselves and from parts of the world.

"I learned a great deal from jazzmen about how much of history, sociology and psychology can be learned from art in ways that textbooks can outline but cannot make as immediate and durably revealing as the confrontation with a man who is nakedly telling you his autobiography." 71

That last phrase, "a man who is nakedly telling you his autobiography", pretty well sums up the "confessional" aspect of jazz improvisation. To again quote Charlie Parker,

"If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn."

## II. FOLK ART AS SOCIAL EXPRESSION OF A COMMUNITY'S FAITH

The last chapter was primarily concerned with giving a background to religious possibilities which we can perceive in various artistic idioms. Examples were cited from areas of folk art and from the world of jazz, but we were concerned primarily with religious roles, ie, priestly and prophetic roles, seen in general artistic effort. In this present chapter we narrow our focus to folk art in particular.

Two aspects of folk art make such forms particularly relevant to our present attempt at seeing religious roles and motifs in artistic media. The first is its social nature; the second is its relative lack of sophistication.

We sometimes think of the distinction between "classical" music (to use the popular meaning of this word) and folk music as being one of the composer's identification. A work of "classical" music is written by one man in a particular setting, and through musicological research we can pretty well determine the circumstances of the composition, even the events of his entire life which surrounded this expression of creative energy. A folk song, on the other hand, we say is composed by the "people". It somehow grew up mysteriously from the total community.

Obviously, such a distinction is naive and fallacious. No "classical" composer ever creates in a vacuum detached from

his social setting. And conversely, no folk song ever sprang full-blown from the mysterious entity known as "the people".

But there is a case for saying that folk music has a broader social base of composition. Even though one man, perhaps anonymously, wrote a work-song, the fact that the rest of the community identified so closely with the song that other people sang it and embellished it and added verses of their own--this indicates a social dimension not found to such a degree in "classical" music. This social dimension is important for our present inquiry. If we look closely at a community's folk songs, we can discern a great deal about what that community holds to be important, what that community believes in, and what that community feels about life and death and suffering and fate. In short, if we look closely at a community's folk art, we can perceive religious motifs.

Secondly, folk art is less sophisticated, and thus, certain qualities of wonder and contemplation are closer to the surface than in work that is more self-consciously "art". A sophisticated man reflects his society in putting greater importance on qualities like critical analysis and precise formulation. Folk art, on the contrary is not so concerned with such clarity of articulation, but rather in eliciting an emotional response of awe and perhaps mystery. Professor Amos Wilder of Harvard Divinity School, in discussing the role of the Christian artist, says this,

"He may also find an apostleship in the realization that the Gospel prevails not by instruction or argument, but by revelation, by bodying forth." 72

This quality of "bodying forth" as opposed to analytical qualities is found more clearly in certain forms of folk art.

#### A. Original Unity of Religion and Art

Back in chapter one, we have already referred to the original unity of religion and art, and how gradually art asserted its independence from religious domination, and how one can trace the history of art by observing this growing independence. It follows then, that the place to look in order to see most clearly the religious aspects of art would be the life of a primitive community. One of the most perceptive studies made in this area is Van der Leeuw's remarkable book, Sacred and profane unity, from which we will use a considerable amount of material in this present discussion.

To primitive man, every act--no matter how ordinary--expresses a sense of powerful "otherness". In one way of looking at this phenomenon, every act has magical powers; only a man never speaks of it in this way unless it intrudes upon him in some remarkable way. Contrasted to the medieval way of looking at life in a two-story manner with the supernatural on top and the natural on the bottom, the primitive man sees both the natural and the supernatural as existing in one place. The natural is seen as that which happens consistently and frequently; it is an everyday occurrence. The supernatural is that which happens so infrequently as to be

unusual. Both reveal "otherness". Instead of seeing life in a two-story manner, this alternative point of view can be diagrammed in concentric circles. The words "usual and unusual" could be substituted for "natural and supernatural". <sup>73</sup>

From this point of view, then, every act expresses a kind of magical power, indeed, has religious associations. Song is a form of prayer, drama is a form of divine performance, and dance a form of cultic ritual. Art and religion are united.

#### 1. Holy Movement: Dance and Religion

Let us look first at dance. To primitive man, prayer and work and dance all participate in the same unity; there is no separation. Among certain Mexican Indians, for example, there is ~~just~~ a single word for dancing and for work. <sup>74</sup> While the others go off to work in the fields, one member of the community is set apart to remain at home and dance the entire day until the others come home at night. Both actions are seen from the same religious perspective.

Even those who are unable to participate by themselves dancing participate passively by being carried on the shoulders of the dancers. In Curt Sachs' History of Dance, he gives examples not only of children being carried in procession--which is fairly common--but also of women and those who have danced to the point of exhaustion being carried by those still dancing. In this respect, the passive participants are "danced" by the others of the community. <sup>75</sup>



All of this has religious meaning--not "religious" in the sense of a particular sensation alongside other sensations, but as the summation of them all. This religious meaning can be seen even in what we would call "secular" dances (though the participants would make no such distinction between secular and sacred) since they are all, by their very nature, religious in that the primitive man sees revealed through the dance a kind of magical "otherness"; holy power is released.

At the point where dance approaches pantomime we see the beginnings of drama. Gradually there occurs a separation of dance and prayer from work, a turning away from everyday life. Depersonification takes place in the portrayal of events like the deeds of the gods. Dancing is done in a manner approaching pantomime, and stylized masks are used to further the detachment. But still the ritual aspects are very much identified with the aspects of a game. The ritual is a kind of holy play.

All of this development, of course, leads to liturgy. The symbol acts as cause. As in sacramental theology, the symbol contains the reality itself although it is not the same thing as the reality. The liturgy serves the necessity of the community

"...to celebrate the tenderness and the fierceness of the world into which the Creator has put them." 76

Even in a contemporary discussion of liturgy, some of the same issues are involved. Professor Tillich writes

"It is not so important to produce new liturgies as it is to penetrate into the depths of what happens day by day, in labor and industry, in marriage and friendship, in social relations and recreation, in meditation and tranquility, in the unconscious and the conscious life. To elevate all this into the light of the eternal is the great task of culture." 77

## 2. Holy Words: Poetry and Religion

"Hi-ho, hi-ho, Holiday,  
The best day of the year  
Little Matty Groves to church did go  
Some holy words to hear, some holy words to hear." 78

This first verse of a dramatic ballad of adultery and revenge going back to England in the beginning of the seventeenth century expresses something of the primitive conception of power being released through the speaking of the "holy words".

A great deal of early music is characterized by the great importance given to the words themselves. In the motets and madrigals of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, even in Elizabethan England, there is a priority of words over music. The accents are not guided by arbitrary bar lines, but are determined by the accents of the poetry, thereby creating fascinating cross-rhythms. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the melodic recitatives of the operas of Monteverdi.<sup>79</sup>

This is also true of the blues. There are a few exceptions, such as Armstrong and Waller using nonsense syllables which almost serve as a sardonic commentary either on the idiocy of the words or the sugariness of the tune, and thus

giving the total effect of deliberate harshness. But by far the more common practice is for the words to be given priority over the music.

This was true even back in the early spirituals in which the biblical imagery was especially effective. The situation pictured in many of these spirituals was one of being en route from slavery through the wilderness to the Promised Land, passing through the desert on the way.

Later, the music of the semi-feudalism in the south following reconstruction days sought for different and new images to portray the community's experience. In a sense, <sup>§1</sup> they needed images that were more "this worldly" than the biblical images. "Crossing Jordan" didn't quite have the power to portray this world of uncertainty in which everyone was on his way somewhere. So the image changed. Instead of "crossing Jordan" the image became "going to Alabama." A community cannot deliberately "choose" its imagery. As Robert Penn Warren says,

"He has forgotten that you can't choose your myth'; your myth has to choose you." <sup>2</sup>

So the imagery of the spirituals gradually was replaced by images of the gambler, or railroads and chain-gangs, of sex, of resentment.

J.R.Morton wrote a thing called "Mamie's Blues":

"She stood on the corner, her feet just soaking wet  
 Begging each and every man that she met  
 If you can't give a dollar,  
 Give me a lousy dime."

Compare Bessie Smith's immortal "Backwater Blues":

"When it thunders and lightnings and the winds begin to blow.  
 Oh when it thunders and lightnings and the winds begin to blow.  
 And thousands of people ain't got no place to go."

"I went and stood up on a high, old lonesome hill,  
 I went and stood up on a high, old lonesome hill,  
 And looked down at the ouse where I used to live." 8;

### 3. Holy Sounds: Music and Religion

Primitive man never considers music as an end in itself--  
 that is some kind of "modern" invention. To a primitive man,  
 music always is powerful in its revelation of the sacred powers  
 of life. We can see this in the Greek myths about Orpheus as  
 well as in the Old Testament story of David soothing the in-  
 sanity (the "evil spirits", cf, I.Samuel 16:16) of King Saul  
 by his playing of the harp. The Christians at Milan were so  
 ont usiastic in their hymn-singing led by their bishop, St.Ambrose,  
 that the Ariens accused them of possessing some kind of magic  
 formula.<sup>84</sup> Certain primitive tribes assigned specific qualities  
 of vitality, such as fertility, to certain instruments as the  
 flute, for example. The pitch and the intonation as well as  
 the intervals themselves were all-important and in many cases  
 determined by precise formulae. The unity between worship and  
 music can still be seen in such widely differing contexts as  
 Gregorian chant and the intonation patterns of a southern  
 revivalist preacher.

But gradually this unity--like the unity with dance and poetry--was broken. Liturgical music--as that music which was integrally linked with the ritual itself--gradually became merely "church music" and the continuity with the other events of life was lost. Religious music became separate in subject matter. It began to have "artistic value" in the sense of being a specialized field. The unity was lost.

### B. Fragmentation: Developing Independence of Art from Religion

There is not much more, really, that can be added about this growing independence except to point further to the distinction between folk music and "cultivated" music using jazz as an example. Jazz is not only music through which something is said, but it is said in a certain way. The intonation is important. For example, the intonation is said to be "hot" when the performer "sings" through his instrument ~~xxx~~ *xyx* with a quality similar to the Negro singing voice, derived from this particular vocal tradition. The same phenomenon can be seen in other folk music, Scotch and Irish ballads, for example. But in jazz certain intonation patterns signify different emotions. Slurring the notes or using semi-tones with vibrato often indicates a kind of suppressed passion, while melancholy can be portrayed by changing the volume and pitch or by attacking a note full and then diminishing the volume.

As art becomes more and more independent there are fewer opportunities to examine characteristics of a folk idiom. Jazz is one such opportunity because, even in modern jazz, the continuity with the earlier forms is fairly easy to see.

## 1. Functional Music

The distinction in this whole section on the fragmentation from the original unity is that of functional music versus the fate which accompanies much of composed music today: a kind of museum aura, an atmosphere for connoisseurs, purely intellectual forms and systems of composition which are overly-cerebral, serving purposes which have no unity with daily experiences.

In contrast to this, jazz asserts, even in more sophisticated and progressive jazz, the creation of art as a social function. Jazz asserts that music is made for people to use, something to do as well as listen to--if nothing more than tap one's foot while actively participating as a listener to a combo. It usually is a mark of a healthy musical culture to place a high importance on "amateur" creativity. Jazz helps restore this "amateur" creation.

## 2. "Art" Music

The tragedy of "art" music is partly its overly-cerebral aspects and partly its appeal to connoisseurs and concertgoers, losing touch with the broader implications of community

life. In many areas of our modern life we are oriented to the conscious level. This has many and complex causes, going back to the iconoclastic forces of the Reformation as well as the rationalistic forces of the Renaissance.<sup>7</sup> In theology, we see this phenomenon in doctrine turning into mere rationalization of dogma and a consequent decline in the vitality of worship--sacrament and symbol becoming impotent.

The difficulty with the "connoisseur" mentality is its narrow definition of respectability and good taste. A person who is inordinately concerned with respectability--whether he find himself within the circles of conventional art or conventional religion or both--is a subject for concern, not because the concern for respectability is inherently depraved, but simply because of the limitations such a concern places on the quality of his experience. There is too much that is genuinely human which such a person must run away from and exclude from his view of the world. He is frightened. And in his fright, he is unable to see that it is precisely those things we run away from that serve to haunt us and, in the end, defeat us. Part of the healthiness of jazz is its willingness to embrace and celebrate all aspects of life, from the most sordid to the most sublime, and to meet them all with a kind of robustness. In ancient times when song was simultaneously poetry and music and dance and work and prayer, there was this healthy celebration of daily human experience. Perhaps we can find it in jazz as well.

### 3. Elements of original unity found in jazz as a folk art

"People are so intellectualist that they prefer to betray themselves and forsake and deny their own history and their own reality and everything that constitutes their value, their greatness, rather than give up their formulae, their tics, their little intellectual manias, the intellectual idea they like to have of themselves, and that they want others to have of them."

So wrote Charles Leguy in a book titled Temporal and Eternal. He speaks of the tragedy of thoughts becoming ideas, of ideas becoming propositions, and what was organic becoming a matter of logic. In looking for a way out of this kind of imaginative sterility, people traditionally look to both art and religion for a way of embracing mystery and the irrational, or if not embrace the irrational, at least allow the non-rational to find an "order" properly its own.

Nathan Scott, professor religion and the arts at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, says of T. S. Eliot:

"The logic which we encounter is thus a logic of the Christian imagination rather than a logic of Christian concepts."

And so as we try to discover some logic of Christian imagination, as we try to understand the material world as a realm within which event and meaning can find expression, we turn to the idiom of jazz to see many of the elements which give folk art its unity.



## 1. Repetition and Incantation

Repeating the same words or the same musical phrase has roots in the primitive and magical way of looking at the world. A child repeats senseless verses he has composed. An uneducated man in conversation says the same thing again and again. All of us, in fact, in times of strong feeling repeat ourselves, as in the death of someone close to us. Since ancient times, man has always repeated his incantations. Certain phrases were repeated by the ancient Egyptian four times, each time in a different direction.<sup>90</sup> In the Christian liturgy, the Kyrie is said either three times or nine times, the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei both are based on triple repetition.

In the light of this, then, it is significant that blues also follows this three-part "a-a-b" form, and this form in turn influences more recent and more complex jazz structures.

"The Blues is basically a strict poetic form combined with music. It is based on a rhymed couplet, with the first line repeated. For example, Billie Holiday sings:

'My man don't love/ me, treats me awful mean;  
Oh he's the lowest man I've ever seen.'

But when she sings it, she repeats the first line-- so it goes:

'My man don't love me, treats me awful mean;  
I said, my man don't love me, treats me awful mean;  
Oh he's the lowest man I've ever seen.'

That is one stanza of Blues. A full Blues is nothing more than a succession of such stanzas for as long as the singer wishes.<sup>91</sup>

This repetitive characteristic in jazz is one way of seeing the continuity with various forms of folk art going all the way back to remnants of structures having a magical incantation effect.

## 2. Suspension and Ecstasy

A second element of folk art which deserves consideration is the strong expression of religious frenzy and ecstasy. Going all the way back to the gnostic controversy in the second century of the Christian church, several writers and poets referred to the image of the dancing Christ, leading a kind of circle-dance with the twelve apostles. St. Gregory of Nazianzus also refers to the Christian life as a form of dance expressing the joy of the divine incarnation.<sup>92</sup> The same motif is found in medieval mysticism, particularly in the "Laude" of the Franciscan ecstatic, Jacopone da Todi, which were originally dance songs. One such verse goes like this:

"Everyone who loves the Lord  
Come to the dance and sing of love.  
May he come to the dance  
Completely caught up by love."<sup>93</sup>

Even up to 1700, ceremonial dance can be found in the worship and culture of the church. At some universities around that time the degree in theology was accompanied by the dean and professors dancing around the newly appointed "Doctor Theologiae." It is unfortunate that in our own time, dance

4

is practically lost except as an art form--a mere fossil of the living dance which caught up the contagious intoxication of the entire community. Only children really dance spontaneously in our sophisticated culture.

But this form of ecstatic expression, of freeing itself from the world, fortunately has not been totally lost in Negro spirituals and gospel songs. This form developed from the sermon which usually took the shape of a rather rigid form of recitative with the congregation offering melodious and sometimes ecstatic cries. Gradually the tempo would become more intense, and song would break forth, a combination of shouting and crying and singing. The song would be of oppressed and faithful people, sung responsorially between leader and chorus, engaging in a kind of ecstasy which one thinks may have been characteristic of some of the Hebrew psalms and the early Christian pneumatic hymns.

A delightful story surrounds the writing of the "Te Deum" by St. Ambrose and St. Augustine at the latter's baptism. In a kind of revival-like enthusiasm, the two men improvised alternately the verses of this now-classic hymn of praise. The story is probably apocryphal, but is no less valid as an indication that this type of pneumatic improvisation was still common in the Christian community up to the time of Augustines's baptism: Easter eve, in the year 387.

### 3. Silence and Mysticism

"The Lord is in his holy temple;  
Let all the earth keep SILENCE before him."

Holding one's breath, falling silent in the presence of the holy is an essential element of worship. The Quaker mystic, Thomas Kelly, speaks of the "silence which is the source of sound." Silence is an essential element of worship; silence is also an essential element of music. The two are related.

The contemporary composer, John Cage, is known for his assertion that silence is music too. Silence is to music, says Van der Leeuw, as darkness is to architecture.<sup>9</sup> It creates tension, it is a negative way of saying something positive, akin to the "via negativa" of the medieval mystics.

The musical expression of silence is the rest or the fermata. Going back to the syncopation of early Gospel songs, the silence that is used to intensify, to create tension in a heightened degree of expectation, is an important in jazz performance, particularly in its rhythmic aspects. We can see this most clearly, in its sharpest expression, in Gospel music, which seems to be enjoying a revival of interest in jazz circles. One such singer is Marion Williams, whom Anthony Heilbut, a teaching fellow at Harvard, asserts is "easily the

most inventive of the gospel singers. Her intricate rhythms, melodic improvisations and firm sense of musical structure are without peer. \* Particularly in the piano accompaniments, the strategic use of silence and syncopation help to create almost a sense of the mystical.

#### 4. Objectivity

There is always a tension in music between the subjective and the objective. In the introduction to Albert Schweitzer's massive work on J.S.Bach, he points to this tension. There are geniuses of the quality of Wagner who by sheer force of their personality represent the highly subjective. And there are the geniuses of the quality of Bach (or in the area of philosophy, says Schweitzer, of the quality of Kant) who work within the existent forms in a way that stresses the objectivity of their work.<sup>97</sup>

Van der Leeuw says music never weeps or laughs over individual events, but always over life itself.<sup>98</sup> This same tension and balance can be seen in the blues. Many of the experiences which the blues-singer comments upon are intensely personal and come right to the edge of becoming wildly subjective, but not quite. Perhaps it is the robust sensuality that redeems the blues from subjectivity, or perhaps it is the sheer act of expression, the sheer act of singing, of weeping through this medium. But whatever it is, the blues at their best always keep the balance. A certain objectivity remains.

### 3. Primitive Emphasis on Rhythm

The beat is the primary musical element in jazz. The beat is largely the element that elicits on the part of the listener as well as the performer an actual physical response. The rhythmic figures done against the beat, the use of syncopation as surprise or shock, even harmonized percussion used rhythmically--these all are extremely important elements of jazz.

Many people link this importance of rhythm in jazz with the use of drums in areas of West Africa. There is a certain degree to which this is true. However, there is an important difference between the African use of drums and the use made of drums in jazz. The use of drums in West Africa is more akin to the use made of them in military marches. This is also true of most "classical" composers' attempts to incorporate jazz motifs into their works, such as Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring", Milhaud's "L'Oreste de Eschyle", Ravel's "Concerto for Left Hand", or Copland's "Jazz Concerto". They all have elements of polyrhythm, but in a rather mechanical way. In jazz, however, the drums serve as a social instrument; that is, they actively involve the listener and performer in a kind of musical surprise, a spirit of the serious and the comic held together. <sup>98</sup> For example, the "break", the sudden silence, the suspension of the regular rhythm and the consequent return to the beat—all of these actively engage the listener, physically as well as intellectually, in a kind of collective enterprise.

## 6. Social Function

Continuing this aspect of jazz being a collective enterprise, we can say that jazz—like all folk art—is predominantly a social music. In contrast to the "genius" theory, the jazz artist does his best work for others, in a setting of interested people. Like all good music, jazz calls for a total response, and like other good music, that total response may not be immediate. The ear must be trained, the idiom must become familiar, there must be a knowledge of the thematic material and stylistic approaches in order for the performance really to assume a community function. The fact that this necessity has sometimes resulted in "in-groupness" among jazz enthusiasts is somewhat unfortunate but inevitable. This is not to say, however, that the appeal of jazz is limited to small in-groups. There are different levels of appreciating jazz—as there are different levels of appreciating Bach. A listener can respond at whatever level his familiarity with the idiom allows.

Whenever the language of the idiom is familiar both to the performers and the listeners, a high degree of social communication takes place. A jazz artist "says something" about himself, but not merely to express himself, but rather to sum-up, or represent, in a truly priestly kind of way, the response of people to whom he plays. Blues piano, for example, is not music written in the privacy of the composer's room, but is

itself a product of a social function: from the setting of saloons, or dances or Chicago rent parties, it is a community experience. We have already referred to the communicative possibilities of jazz, the "speaking" quality of some performers--almost as if the melodic phrases were words. But the very form as well is dependent on the social function. The setting in New Orleans, for example, the ghetto, the place of funerals in the life of the community--all these things contributed to the form which jazz took in those early days. It was a truly communal creation.

#### 7. Child-like Humor: Holy Play

One of the most important elements of jazz as a folk art which indicates the primitive unity of religion and art is the humor of jazz.

Jazz is playing around with notes--fooling around with them, having fun with them. Melodically this is done with the improvised line. In terms of tonal color, it is done with the expressive contrasts and comic aspects of blue notes. An excellent example of both of these is the so-called "dirty" tones of early trumpet players. Jazz essentially is playing around with sounds.

One of the tragedies of the process of civilization is its fetish of utilitarianism. Play is counted a waste of time, as something superfluous. Anything lacking in seriousness,



we say, must also be lacking in value. We talk about playing Bach, but how few performers really "play" Bach! This tragic loss of playfulness is beautifully expressed in the form of a prayer spoken by a dying priest in a novel by Elisabeth Langgasser:

"Who will be converted to thee, O my God? Who will again give to this land monasteries of silence and adoration? Who will make them feel again the need to play—even as the Divine Wisdom made play at the beginning of time before the world was made? Who will transform this hideous edifice of unrelieved utility, O my uninhibited God, into one of sheer, gratuitous uselessness? Who will turn every petition into pure song of praise, and every clamoring want into a vessel overflowing with the generosity of the beginning?"<sup>99</sup>

The loss of playfulness is a pretty high price to pay for growing-up. And yet this is precisely what civilization does in its sophistication: it exchanges playfulness for utility. A fetish is made of utilitarianism. Anything which cannot be used for some pragmatic purpose is discarded, and since play is considered superfluous, it is counted a waste of time. The result of this "barren solemnity of a purely utilitarian view of life" is that we're trapped "on a hopelessly wrong road of idiotic earnestness, or on the senseless one of exclusive preoccupation with the things of this world."<sup>100</sup>

One of the tragedies of the process of civilization is its fetish utilitarianism. Play is counted a waste of time. Yet all true laughter is deep. People who do not believe very profoundly do not laugh very much. They may make wisecracks or giggle nervously or satirize. Even in the world of jazz

this sometimes is the case. Occasionally even such a great artist as Louis Armstrong had to succumb to the pressure to mock his own people in such songs as "Shine", "You Rascal You", and "When It's Sleepy Time Down South". There was no relation to joyousness in these songs, but rather a savage form of prejudice disguised as humor.<sup>101</sup> But true humor springs from deeper and healthier sources.

True humor is a sense of the incongruous and the ridiculous. It comes from the same spring as pathos. Both are related to reverent joy, related to not taking the things of this world too seriously, not taking one's self too seriously. Thomas Merton writes of the general dance:

"What is serious to man is often very trivial in the sight of God. What in God might appear to us as 'play' is perhaps what He Himself takes most seriously. At any rate, the Lord plays and diverts Himself in the garden of his creation, and if we could let go of our obsession with what we think is the meaning of it all, we might be able to hear his call and follow him in his mysterious, cosmic dance. We do not have to go very far to catch echoes of that game, and of the dancing. When we are alone on a starlit night; when by chance we see the migrating birds in autumn descending on a grove of junipers to rest and eat; when we see children in a moment when they really are children; when we know love in our own hearts; or when, like the Japanese poet Basho we hear an old frog land in a quiet pond with a solitary splash--at such times the awakening, the turning inside out of all value, the 'newness' of the emptiness and the purity of vision that make themselves evident, provide a glimpse of the cosmic dance." 102

William Strigfellow writes "Holiness is enjoying God."

This is the humor of jazz. It is the humor of Bach's orchestration of the word "inanes" (The rich he hath sent "empty" away) in his setting of the Magnificat: the two flutes stop playing, leaving only the continuo. It is the humor of his setting, in the St. Matthew Passion, of the words "this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the poor": the notes are repeated in very rigid time suggesting the conventionality of the comment by the overly-practical disciples. It is the humor of the statue in no less awesome place than the cathedral in Chartres depicting a donkey playing a hurdy-gurdy. It is the humor of a jazz performer playing around with notes.

Kierkegaard, in Concluding Unscientific Postscript, wrote,

"The inner essence of humor lies, no matter how heretical this may seem, in the strength of the religious disposition; for what humor does is to note how far all earthly and human things fall short of the measure of God."

We can see the same reality in the statement of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 18:3,

"Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."

## 8. Celebration of the Whole Gamut of Human Experience

Finally, it is the realism of jazz, the emotional realism which celebrates the whole gamut of human experience. The form varies: from blues and work-songs to Gospel songs to

modern "third stream" jazz. But the content is life-- the life of those in the front line of the struggle to conquer nature, those who work with their hands and bodies, those who live out every day the hardships which face all but a favored few. Jazz is a celebration.

#### a. Events of Alienation and Loneliness

Billie Holiday begins her autobiography with these words:

"Mom and Pop were just a couple of kids when they got married. He was eighteen, she was sixteen, and I was three." 105

The celebration of jazz is not naive or sugar-coated; it begins with the hard rock-bed of reality. It began as the music of a dispossessed race with nothing more they could possibly lose, so therefore they could accept alienation for what it was. Thus jazz is able to celebrate, with a universal significance, the awareness of dispossession. It is a symbol of the alienation of modern, urban man. B. B. Lawrence says, "Jazz is like a great uprooted tree." 106 That uprootedness must be included in any artistic portrayal that attempts to be honest.

When actress Anna Magnani was having her portrait done by the famous photographer Phillippe Halsman, she said to him,

"Don't hide my wrinkles--I suffered too much to get them." Something of that spirit is caught up in jazz. People say jazz is low-class. But most music has low-class origins-- especially folk music which is necessarily earthy. Haydn

took minutes from simple rustic German dances, the same place where Beethoven got many of his scherzos. Verdi took some of his arias from the songs of Neapolitan fishermen.<sup>1</sup> Indignity has always been connected with music, especially the players. Players are never as respectable as composers, for some reason, and jazz is a player's art: it emphasizes improvisation rather than composition.

Jazz began as the music of misfits.

Martin Luther wrote,

"The curse of a godless man can sound more pleasant in God's ears than the hallelujah of the pious."

Again from Billie Holiday's autobiography, these words:

"I found out the main difference between uptown and downtown was people are more for real up there. They got to be, I guess. Uptown a whore was a whore... downtown it was different—more complicated. A whore was sometimes a socialite. I always had trouble keeping this double talk straight. 100

"A whorehouse was about the only place where black and white folks could meet in any natural way." 109

Henry Miller writes about "one of those happy misfits who has tested everything and who, God bless him!, has therefore no more respect for the inside of a temple than the inside of a jail, no more consideration for a scholar than for a tramp, no higher opinion of a judge than of the culprit who keeps the judge in food and raiment." 110

So jazz was a form of music hammered-out in the experiences of struggle and loneliness: no pleasant drawing-rooms and lace cuffs. Strigfellow says that loneliness is the

ordinary but overwhelming anxiety that all relationships are lost.<sup>111</sup> Listen closely to the wail of the blues and see how accurate this is. But struggle is necessary for art. It gives it shape. Again, Henry Miller writes

"It is my belief that the immature artist seldom thrives in idyllic surroundings. What he seems to need (though I am the last to advocate it) is more first-hand experience of life--more bitter experience, in other words. In short, more struggle, more privation, more anguish, more disillusionment."<sup>112</sup>

Within such a musical vocabulary, created by a group of people who were meeting the world on its sharpest, harshest, and most demanding terms, the anguish of Israel became a reality to them.

Billie Holiday says: "Don't ever think all the 'displaced persons' were in Europe. I've been one for years."<sup>113</sup>

The Psalmist says: "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept. How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"<sup>114</sup>

Both quotations point to a similar reality. It is a reality which is celebrated in jazz.

#### b. Events of Joy

The events in the last section and the events in this present section are the very same events. But somehow by singing about them, by celebrating them in blues and gospel song, the singing itself becomes a way of making the experience bearable.

"I woke up this mornin' with an awful achin' head,  
 Yes, I woke up this mornin' with an awful achin' head,  
 My new man had left me just a room and a empty bed."

"Love does not begin and end the way we seem to think it does," writes James Baldwin. "Love is a war; love is growing up." And again, "For the act of love is a confession. One lies about the body but the body does not lie about itself; it cannot lie about the force which drives it."

The experience of loving and suffering--these are the events of jazz. It is an original kind of emotional expression which is neither wholly sad or wholly happy. No matter how self-pitying the words, they never quite become sticky and sentimental; they retain a robustness, a hard-boiled quality. And through it all, there is an aspect of rejoicing. Heinz Werner Zimmermann, in commenting on his use of jazz motifs in his setting of some of the psalms, "Psalm Konzert", has this to say:

"Why jazz?  
 Because a composer would have to stop his ears if  
 he did not want to be influenced by it.  
 Because it is a new music capable of assimilating  
 musical tradition--secular instrumental music  
 yet originating in the religious vocal music  
 of the spirituals.  
 Because it is the only new music that still knows  
 how to rejoice. 416

The last reason is the clincher: Jazz is the only new music that still knows how to rejoice.

## III. DEVELOPMENT OF JAZZ HISTORICALLY

It is not within the scope of this present essay to give a "history of jazz"; there are many books available which serve such a purpose. However, simply for the purpose of perspective and for the purpose of identifying certain outstanding artists in their approximate setting, we include here such a list.

## ARCHAIC (1875-1915)

Work songs  
Gospel songs  
Field hollers  
Medicine shows  
Ragtime  
Blues

## NEW ORLEANS (1915-1925)

Louis Armstrong  
King Oliver  
Nick LaRocca  
Jelly Roll Morton  
Kid Ory  
Honore Dutrey  
Leon Rapallo  
Johnny Dodds  
Jimmy Noone  
Bessie Smith

## CHICAGO-NEW YORK (1925-1935)

Earl Hines  
James Johnson  
Fats Waller  
Six Beiderbecks  
Miff Mole  
Jack Teagarden  
Frank Teschemacher  
Doc Wee Russell  
Bud Freeman  
Eddie Lang  
Jimmy Harrison  
Tommy Lednier



## SWING (1935-1940)

Art Tatum  
 Teddy Wilson  
 Roy Eldridge  
 Bunny Berigan  
 Vic Dickenson  
 Benny Goodman  
 Benny Carter  
 Johnny Hodges  
 Coleman Hawkins  
 Chu Berry  
 Ben Webster  
 Harry Carney  
 Charlie Christian  
 Django Reinhardt  
 Red Norvo  
 Hershel Evans

## EARLY PROGRESSIVE (1940-1948)

Bud Powell  
 Dizzy Gillespie  
 Miles Davis  
 Bill Harris  
 Charlie Parker  
 J.J. Johnson  
 Stan Hasselgard  
 Lester Young  
 Serge Chaloff

## LATER PROGRESSIVE (1948- )

Horace Silver  
 Oscar Peterson  
 Hampton Hawes  
 Chet Baker  
 Clifford Brown  
 Bob Brookmeyer  
 Lee Konitz  
 John Coltrane  
 Gerry Mulligan  
 Tal Farlow  
 George Shearing  
 Stan Getz  
 Milt Jackson

## Summary:

In the introduction to this essay we referred to the comment which the musicologist made to Charles Seeger,

"You know, I don't hate jazz; I think it's probably very important and it certainly deserves serious study. The trouble is that all the jazz people treat it as holy, holy, holy!" 118

There is nothing about jazz that is "holy, holy, holy"-- at least in the sense that the musicologist meant. As an art form it must confront squarely its limitations and contradictions: some of the contradictions are directly a product of the contradictions in our social life which rise predominantly out of the place of the Negro people in American life.<sup>119</sup> But there are musical limitations as well. Jazz has done battle with popular culture and shows some of the scars of that battle:<sup>120</sup> in some ways, jazz is one-sided, narrow in its stock of emotions, at times embittered and self-consciously shocking. Modern jazz in particular sounds overweighted harmonically and over-elaborate in instrumental texture. In some ways jazz has reached a kind of impasse beyond which it cannot go if it remains within the forms in which it presently exists. It must enter larger forms, making use of composition embodying more complex problems of human conflict and emotion.<sup>121</sup> Such a development will have to be radical in nature--as radical as when jazz left the New Orleans

phase of its history. But whatever the import of these artistic and cultural limitations, jazz remains the one uniquely American musical form, a form which is alive and creative, a form which says some things which are profoundly human, and thereby, profoundly religious.

In an essay titled "Letter from a Region of my Mind" which he includes in his book, The Fire Next Time, James Baldwin describes the Harlem store-front church services of his youth:

"There is still for me no pathos quite like the pathos of those multicolored, worn, somehow triumphant and transfigured faces, speaking from the depths of a visible, tangible, continuing despair of the goodness of the Lord. I have never seen anything to equal the fire and excitement that sometimes, without warning, fills a church, causing the church, as it belly and so many others have testified, to 'rock'".  
(The New Yorker, November 17, 1962, p.72)

The key phrase is this:

"...speaking from the depths of despair of the goodness of the Lord."

That is the summary

of this essay!

The late Jesuit scientist, Teilhard de Chardin, writes in The Divine Milieu,

"By virtue of the Creation, even more by that of the Incarnation, NOTHING is PROFANE here below, to one who can see. Everything is sacred." 122

If it is necessary--and it probably is not--to put these reflections into the framework of traditional dogma, the reality we have been pointing toward for these sixty pages

is the reality of the Incarnation. The Incarnation is first a description of the reality of creation, and dogma comes later. The dogma is derived from the reality. Neither the theology nor the devotional life of the Christian community is exhausted in its dogma. The Incarnation is a dogmatic fact because it is first of all an event.

The dogma of the Incarnation, as it has been hammered-out in the history of the church, has to do with the nature of Christ. But it also has to do with the nature of the created order. The nature and meaning of the Incarnation determine the relation of the person to the created order. Traditionally, there are two main heresies: The Arian view and the Docetist view. The Arian denies the mystery of nature; the Docetist denies the goodness of nature. For one, Christian experience becomes flattened into a sterile rationalism. For the other, there is something corrupt about earthiness and thus the divine must keep itself insulated from the material world of things as they are. In either case, whenever the church leans too closely to either heresy, she denies the Incarnation, she denies the mystery and holiness of God's entering--and thereby sanctifying--the material of the earth.

Perhaps the artist can fulfill his vocation by reminding the theologian of the Incarnation: by reminding him of this sense of the holiness of the earth, and this rootedness of the Christian life in the substance of things as they are.

Perhaps there is some artistic idiom--even a musical one--which can protest sterile rationalism and, at the same time,

celebrate the earthy.

Perhaps in some unexpected place--in some place that  
is not ecclesiastical, and in ways which do not even an ear to  
be "religious"--someone will teach us

how to rejoice in the day which the Lord has made,  
how to speak from the depths of despair of the goodness  
of the Lord,

how to sing the Lord's song in a strange land!

## NOTES

1. Stearns, Marshall, The Story of Jazz, New York: Mentor Books, 1956, p. ix.
2. Boyd, Malcolm, from a conversation on Station WBB from The Seventh Circle Coffee House in Boston, Mass.
3. Theaker, Eric, "First Catch Your Jazz", Mosaic: A Quarterly Review of Church Music, Liturgy, and the Arts, October 1965, London: Epworth Press, p. 107-112.
4. Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre, SJ, Unvan of the Universe, New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1961.
5. Cox, Harvey, God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility, Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1965, p. 28.
6. Van der Leeuw, Gerardus, Sacred and Profane Beauty, New York: Holy, Rinehart and Winston, 1963, p. 15.
7. Cox, p. 96.
8. Teilhard de Chardin, The Divine Milieu, New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1960, p. 82.
9. Cox, p. 20.
10. quoted in William Robert Miller, The World of Popular Music and Jazz, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, p. 9.
11. Ibid., p. 11.
12. Wilder, Amos, quoted in article by O.M. Cartford, "The Incarnation, the Arts, and the Younger Churches", Response, Easter 1964.
13. Salinger, J.D., Frenny and Zoocy, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955, p. 200.
14. Cox, p. 92, 93.
15. Halverson, Marvin, editor, Religious Drama 2, New York: Meridian Books, Inc., p. 13.
16. quoted by George W. Cornell in an article commemorating the life of Martin Buber in the San Francisco Chronicle.
17. Tillich, Paul, and Theodore M. Greene, from a paper on the essence of a religiously expressive art, quoted in a brochure printed by the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia for its "Festival of Contemporary Religious Art."
18. quoted in Finley Eversoll, Christian Faith and the Contemporary Arts, New York: Abingdon Press, 1957, p. 7.
19. Tillich, Paul, Theology of Culture, New York: Oxford University Press, 1959, p. 7.
20. Stringfellow, William, Free in Obedience, New York: Seabury Press, 1964, p. 124.
21. Ibid., p. 100.
22. St. Luke 1:8.
23. St. Luke 19:40.
24. quoted in Eversoll, p. 6.
25. brochure from "The Unspoken Word" from the Festival of the Arts, presented by University Lutheran Church and St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, March 12-21, 1965.
26. from a review by A.M. Buchan of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, of The Barbarian Within, by Walter Ong, SJ, January 1963.

27. Baldwin, James, Another Country, New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1960, pp.13,14.
28. Brooks, Glenah, in Eversoll, pp.105,106.
29. Merton, Thomas, Bread in the Wilderness, New York: New Directions Books, 1953, p.3.
30. Van der Leeuw, p.228.
31. Roling, James, Esquire's World of Jazz, New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Publishers, 1974, pp.21,22.
32. Miller, Henry, St. Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch, p.32.
33. Joyce, James, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. London: The Folio Society, 1965, p.168.
34. Ibid, p.178.
35. Ibid, p.178.
36. Ibid, p.171.
37. Ibid, p.232.
38. quoted in Eversoll, p.6.
39. quoted in Eversoll, p.142.
40. Tillich, Paul, The Protestant Era, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948, p.165.
41. Tillich, Theology of Culture, chapter 6.
42. quoted in Eversoll, p.143.
43. quoted by Roger Shinn in Eversoll, p.72.
44. Ibid, p.73.
45. Wright, Richard, in a foreword to Paul Oliver's The Meaning of the Blues, New York: Collier Books, 1960, p.9.
46. Janus, Albert, Resistance, Rebellion, and Death, New York: Knopf, 1960, p.241.
47. quoted in W.R.Miller, p.10.
48. Carmichael, Standrod T., from pamphlet on his setting of "Music of the Liturgy", Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis.
49. quoted in Eversoll, p.77
50. Ibid, p.78.
51. Janus, Albert, "Speech of Acceptance upon Award of Nobel Prize for Literature", New York: Knopf, 1958, pp.viii-x.
52. Shinn in Eversoll, pp.73,74.
53. quoted in W.R.Miller, p.10.
54. quoted in Eversoll, p.6.
55. Ibid, p.8.
56. quoted in Kaufmann, Walter, editor, Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, New York: Meridian Books, Inc. 191.
57. Eversoll, p.11.
58. Finkelstein, Sidney, Jazz: A People's Music, New York: The Citadel Press, 1948, p.273.
59. Poling, p.24.
60. Ibid, p.20.
61. Reisner, Robert George, Bird: The Legend of Charlie Parker. New York: The Citadel Press, 1962, p.27.
62. Holiday, Billie, with William Dufty, Lady, Sing the Blues. Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1956, p.70.
63. Ibid, p.47.
64. Poling, p.20.
65. Finkelstein, p.109.

66. Finkelstein, p.111.
67. Ibid., p.113.
68. Ibid., p.113.
69. Miller, Jeanne, "From Jazz to Ad-lib Acting", San Francisco Examiner, July 19, 1965, p.23.
70. quoted in Nat Kentoff, "Art and the Search for Identity", Orientation 1965, July 1965, p.26.
71. Ibid., p.26.
72. Response, Easter 1964.
73. Van der Leeuw, p.11 ff.
74. Ibid., p.16.
75. Ibid., p.15.
76. Felikan, Jaroslav, The Middle of Roman Catholicism, Nashville: Abingdon press, 1959, p.166.
77. Tillich, Protestant Era, p.219.
78. Solomon, Waynard, editor, The Joan Baez Songbook, New York: Ryerson Music Publishers, 1964, p.68.
79. Finkelstein, p.39.
80. Ibid., p.40.
81. Ibid., p.91.
82. quoted in Eversoll, p.87.
83. Finkelstein, p.135.
84. Van der Leeuw, p.214.
85. Ibid., p.217.
86. Poling, p.14.
87. Samuel H. Miller, quoted in Eversoll, page 12.
88. Reguy, Charles, Temporal and Eternal, p.74.
89. quoted in Eversoll, p.13.
90. Van der Leeuw, p.222.
91. Bernstein, Leonard, The Joy of Music, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950, p.103.
92. Van der Leeuw, p.29.
93. Ibid., p.26.
94. Ibid., p.24.
95. Ibid., p.236.
96. Capic Recording, "The Great Gospel Voice of Marion Williams"
97. Van der Leeuw, p.249.
98. Finkelstein, pp.41-43.
99. quoted in Hugo Rahner, SJ, Man at Play, London: Burns and Oates, 1964, p.6.
100. Finkelstein, p.160.
101. Rahner, page 3.
102. Merton, Thomas, "The General Dance", Ave Maria periodical
103. Stringfellow, William, "Loneliness, Dread, and Holiness" Christian Century, October 10, 1962, p.1222.
104. quoted in Rahner, p.32.
105. Holiday, p.5.
106. Wellers, Alfred, Music in a New Found Land, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965, p.262 ff.
107. Bernstein, p.97.
108. Holiday, p.101.
109. Ibid., p.16
110. Henry Miller, Big Sur.
111. Stringfellow, Christian Century, p.1220.
112. Miller, Big Sur, p.13.



- 113. Holiday, p.180.
- 114. Psalm 137.
- 115. "Empty Bed Blues" by J.G.Johnson, quoted in Bernstein, p.95.
- 116. Zimmermann, Heinz Werner, "Psalm Konzert", Cantate Schallplatten 640-229.
- 117. Mehegan, John, Jazz Improvisation, Volume II, New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, p.17.
- 118. Stearns, p.1x.
- 119. Finkelstein, p.231.
- 120. Ibid, 271.
- 121. Ibid, 235.
- 122. Teilhard de Chardin, The Divine Milieu, p.66.
- 123. John Dixon, quoted in Eversoll, p.36 ff.
- 124. Ibid.
- 125. Ibid.
- 126. Ibid.
- 127. Ibid.

## Bibliography

1. Adderly, Julian "Cannonball", A Child's Introduction to Jazz, Riverside: Wonderland Records 14-B,
2. Bailliet, Whitney, The Sound of Satchmo. New York: E.P.Dutton and Company, Inc, 1959.
3. Baldwin, James, Another Country, Dell Publishing Company, 1960.
4. The Fire Next Time, The New Yorker, November 17, 1962.
5. Berendt, Joachim, The New Jazz Book, New York: Hill and Wang, 1959.
6. Bernstein, Leonard, The Joy of Music, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956.
7. Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, Life Together, New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1954.
8. Boyd, Malcolm, a conversation in Boston, Massachusetts at the Seventh Circle Coffee House, WBZ.
9. Buchan, A.M., review of The Barbarian Within, by Walter Ong, SJ, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 1963.
10. Camus, Albert, "Resistance, Rebellion, and Death," New York: Knopf, 1960.
11. Speech of Acceptance upon Award of Nobel Prize for Literature, New York: Knopf, 1958.
12. Carmichael, Standrod T., pamphlet explaining his setting of "The Music of the Liturgy", Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis, Missouri.
13. Charters, Samuel B., The Country Blues, New York: Rinehart and Company Inc, 1959.
14. Coker, Jerry, Improvising Jazz, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964.
15. Cornell, George, article in the San Francisco Chronicle, following the death of Martin Buber, commemorating his life.
16. Cox, Harvey, God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility, Valley Forge: The Judson Press, 1965.
17. The Secular City, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965.
18. Downbeat: Music, 1960, 1963, 1964, 1965, Meher Publications.
19. Ellis, Havelock, The Dance of Life, New York: The Modern Library, 1923.

20. Eversoll, Finley, Christian Faith and the Contemporary Arts, New York: Abingdon Press, 1957.
21. Feather, Leonard, The Encyclopedia of Jazz, New York: Horizon Press, 1955.
22. Festival of the Arts, brochure on "The Unspoken Word", presented by University Lutheran Church and St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, March 12-21, 1965.
23. Finkelstein, Sidney, Jazz: A People's Music, New York: The Citadel Press, 1948.
24. Guardini, Romano, The Church and the Catholic, and The Spirit of the Liturgy, New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc, pp.171-184, "The Playfulness of the Liturgy", 1935.
25. Halverson, Marvin, editor, Delicious Drama 2, New York: Meridian Books, Inc.,
26. Hentoff, Nat, "Art and the Search for Identity", Orientation 1965, July 1965.
27. Herskovits, Melville, The Myth of the Negro Past, Boston: Beacon Press, 1941.
28. Hodeir, Andre, Forward Jazz, New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1962.
29. Holiday, Billie with William Dufty, Lady, Sing the Blues, Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1956.
30. Jazz 1959, published by Metronome Corporation, 114 East 72nd Street, New York 16, NY.
31. Jones, LeRoi, Blues People, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1963.
32. Joyce, James, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, London: The Folio Society, 1965.
33. Kaufman, Walter, editor, Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, New York: Meridian Books, Inc.
34. Lang, Paul, Henry, Music in Western Civilization, New York: W.W.Norton and Company, 1941.
35. Mahegan, John, Jazz Improvisation, Volumes I and II, New York: Watson-Gurtill Publications, Inc, 1959-1962.
36. Mellers, Wilfred, Music in a New Found Land, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965.
37. Merton, Thomas, Bread in the Wilderness, New York: New Directions Books, 1955.

Miller, Henry, Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch.

39. Miller, Jeanne, "From Jazz to Ad-Lib Acting" San Francisco Examiner, July 19, 1965.
40. Miller, William Robert, The World of Popular Music and Jazz, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965.
41. Oliver, Paul, The Meaning of the Blues, New York: Collier Books, 1960.
42. Peguy, Charles, Temporal and Eternal, New York: Harper, 1932.
43. Pelikan, Jaroslav, The Middle of Roman Catholicism, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1959.
44. Poling, James, Squire's World of Jazz, New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Publishers, 1974.
45. Ranner, Hugo, SJ, Man at Play, London: Burns and Oates, 1964.
46. Reisner, Robert George, Bird: The Legend of Charlie Parker, New York: The Citadel Press, 1962.
47. Response magazine, article by C.M. Jartford, "The Incarnation, The Arts, and The Younger Churches", Easter 1964.
48. Salinger, J.D., Franny and Zooey, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1955.
49. Solomon, Maynard, editor, The New Song Songbook, New York: Ryerson Music Publishers, 1954.
50. Stearns, Marshall, The Story of Jazz, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.
51. Stringfellow, William, Free in Obedience, New York: Seabury Press, 1964.
52. "Loneliness, Bread, and Holiness" Christian Century, October 10, 1962.
53. Summerlin, Ed, Liturgical Jazz, Ecclesia Records, ER 101.
54. Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre, SJ, Hymn of the Universe, New York: Harper and Row, 1961.
55. The Divine Milieu, New York: Harper and Row, 1960.
56. Thacker, Eric, "First Catch Your Jazz", Ecclid: A Quarterly Review of Church Music, Liturgy, and the Arts, London: Boworth Press, October 1965.
57. Tillich, Paul, The Protestant Era, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948.  
Theology of Culture, New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.  
Paper, written with Theodore M. Greene, on the essence of a religiously expressive art.

58. Ulanov, Barry, Handbook of Jazz, New York: The Viking Press, 1960.
59. Van der Leeuw, Gerardus, Sacred and Profane Beauty, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963.
60. Washington, John, "Black Religion", review in Theology Today, Volume 20, April 1963.
61. Williams, Marion, Epic Recording, "The Grest Gospel Voice of Marion Williams."
62. Zimmermann, Heinz Werner, "Psalm Konzert", Cantate Schallplatten 640-229.